

Case Study: Elizabethton City

This case study illustrates a Grow Your Own partnership between a district and Education Preparation Provider (EPP) that provides innovative, no-cost pathways for aspiring educators to help establish a strong pipeline to train and develop Tennessee teachers.



Overview

The Elizabethton City school district has 5 schools in their system; each school participates in their Grow Your Own (GYO) partnership with Milligan University. Liaisons from the school district and EPP co-lead candidates through an application and interview process to identify strong candidates for participation. Selected candidates have previous experience in the district and are each pursuing different program pathways that include special education, elementary, and secondary certification. Working with the district full-time, Milligan University provides rigorous coursework and fulfills key GYO criteria for individualized candidate need. .

Participant Example

While each GYO participant has varied coursework and licensure experience, the cohort collectively reflects key programmatic elements for replication and scale. Highlights included:

- An accommodating EPP partner with creative scheduling that offers a mix of modules and modes for delivery, including online and in person classes.
- Regular check-ins from both EPP and district leaders, allowing candidates to share needs, celebrate progress, access meaningful research studies, discuss coursework challenges, and maintain strong relationships.
- Adequate financial support that covers the costs for degree, licensure, textbooks, and associated program expenses.

Program Reflection

Mentorship has been a vital component of program success for GYO candidates in Elizabethton City Schools. The partnership between EPP and district leadership to ensure a high-quality, school-based mentor and a university supervisor for each GYO candidate proved foundational to the program experience. The district and EPP maintain TEAM observations, assessment rubrics, student data, mentor feedback, and candidate self-assessment to ensure GYO participants were on track for greatest student impact.